



EMPLOYERS & HIRING MANAGERS:

Why Q4 is an ideal time to hire and onboard new employees

Don't write off December!

Over the years, we've noticed a troubling pattern: hiring tends to go on hiatus in Q4.

It's certainly not because business has slowed. With leadership focused on hitting year-end numbers and top performers aiming to make their bonuses, there's plenty of activity afoot. But as talent acquisition professionals, we've come to expect a lull in our workload each year heading into fall. And while we understand the reasons, we see it as a missed opportunity.

Placing searches on hold and pushing back start dates might seem like a good idea. After all, the holiday season is coming up, lots of people will be on vacation, and hiring

managers are looking forward to some downtime. However, putting staffing off till January can waste precious time that you can't get back.

Q4 is actually a great time to hire and welcome new employees to your team. Here's why.

1. There's less competition for top marketing, advertising and creative talent.

Employers may be resting on their laurels at the end of the year, but top candidates in marketing, advertising and creative fields are on the move. Holidays or not, candidates are actively looking for new opportunities this time of year. This means you have a real shot

at adding to your team a few marketing rockstars that your competitors otherwise might have snapped up any other time of the year.

2. You can avoid burning out your team (and keep billing).

For many consumer brands and nonprofits (and the agencies that serve them), the holidays are actually a high-volume time of year in terms of sales and revenue. Not having a full team means you may not be operating at peak performance (or billing the hours you expected) – and during the busy season, that can cost you money. Hitting a ceiling on growth is never fun, and especially not during the time of year when the lion's share of revenue is expected.

Not to mention this stretches your existing team far too thin during a time when everyone else they know is relaxing at home with friends and family. It's a recipe for burnout you can easily avoid by staffing up in Q4, rather than waiting for that "ideal" moment in the new year.

3. Your new hires get to learn 'by osmosis' while your team strategizes for the year ahead.

The end of the year is a natural time to reflect on the progress you've made, reassess the challenges you've faced, and look forward to what you hope to accomplish in the months ahead.

This gives your new employees a unique opportunity to absorb information about the company and their role that will be vital to their success, simply by being in the room during important discussions.

Your new hires get to see the 30,000-foot view before the year begins and before they (and everyone else) get caught up in the day-to-day.

The fresh perspectives that new team members bring can also open your eyes to alternative approaches, potential obstacles you haven't anticipated, or trends you might have missed – before your plans are set in stone.





Including new team members in these important discussions can also help you bond with new hires and help them feel valued and welcome.

4. You can hit the ground running in January.

As we all know, returning from the holidays at the first of the year can be grueling. The transition from festivities and Hallmark movie binges to a calendar chock-full of meetings and deadlines can be a shock to the system. Not the best atmosphere for onboarding a new hire.

When you fill open positions in Q4, you avoid thrusting new hires into the weeds on day one. A more laid-back schedule means they have space to review materials, and get up to speed on your systems and technology rather than jumping right into a project. And while your team is less busy, they can show them the ropes.

Most employees don't start contributing immediately, anyway. A late-year start date gives them plenty of time to get acclimated

before their output is truly needed.

4. 'It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year'... to mix and mingle!

Ramping up in a new role is about more than getting the hang of the job itself. Fitting in — meeting your co-workers, learning who's who, and familiarizing yourself with the company culture — is a big part of onboarding success.

But when your team is remote or hybrid, opportunities for face time are less abundant — except, perhaps, at the end of the year. Q4 hosts a flurry of in-person events, lunches and holiday parties. No matter what traditions your employees celebrate, or how many of them work remotely, year-end is a wonderful time to gather in-person.

All the merrymaking provides a natural opportunity to introduce new employees to the rest of the team (and clients) before everyone retreats into their home offices for the rest of the winter.

This worked well for Brittani Kroog, who

kicked off her remote job as Recruiting & Talent Sourcer at Freeman+Leonard in Q4 of 2021 with an in-person day at the company's coworking space.

"It was great meeting HR, IT and my manager in person, followed by a team lunch. That was a very personable first day," she says. "Starting in December also meant I got to have social time with everyone for the holidays, which was so nice."

Getting bumped to January means missing out on the casual team bonding and personal connections that Q4 onboarding affords. (Plus, your Q4 new hires will get to be in on the holiday party inside jokes in January, instead of feeling even more like an outsider.)

It's not too late to add to your team this year.

Whether you're thinking about pausing an active search or delaying a new search for the next couple of months, we encourage you to think again.

We see it every year — employers who continue to recruit in November and December have an edge over those who don't.

The marketing and advertising talent experts at Freeman+Leonard can help you with your search and onboarding process year-round.

The hiring landscape is still competitive, but strong candidates enter the job market daily.

Strike while the iron is hot, and don't miss your chance to tap the advantages of Q4 hiring and onboarding. Reach out for a free, no-strings consultation.

Get in touch today.

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